

Applicant Initiated Interview Request Form

Application No.: 10/517,063 First Named Applicant: Mori
 Examiner: Ngoc Yen M. Nguyen Art Unit: 1793 Status of Application: Final Rej.

Tentative Participants:

(1) Ngoc Yen M. Nguyen (2) Stephen Kopchik
 (3) _____ (4) _____

Proposed Date of Interview: 9/15/10 Proposed Time: 1:00 (AM/PM) AM

Type of Interview Requested:

(1) Telephonic (2) Personal (3) Video Conference

Exhibit To Be Shown or Demonstrated: YES NO

If yes, provide brief description: _____

Issues To Be Discussed

Issues (Rej., Obj., etc)	Claims/ Fig. #s	Prior Art	Discussed	Agreed	Not Agreed
(1) <u>Rej.</u>	<u>1-8</u>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

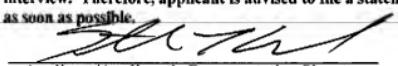
Continuation Sheet Attached

Proposed Amendment or Arguments Attached

Brief Description of Arguments to be Presented:

An interview was conducted on the above-identified application on _____.
 NOTE: This form should be completed by applicant and submitted to the examiner in advance of the interview
 (see MPEP § 713.01).

This application will not be delayed from issue because of applicant's failure to submit a written record of this interview. Therefore, applicant is advised to file a statement of the substance of this interview (37 CFR 1.133(b)) as soon as possible.


 Applicant/Applicant's Representative Signature

Examiner/SPE Signature

Stephen Kopchik
 Typed/Printed Name of Applicant or Representative

61,215

Registration Number, if applicable

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.133. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.11 and 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 21 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

If you need assistance in completing the form, call 1-800-PTO-9199 and select option 2.

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of : Attorney Docket No. 2004_1936A
Yoichi MORI et al. : Confirmation No. 8727
Serial No. 10/517,063 : Group Art Unit 1793
Filed April 15, 2005 : Examiner Ngoc Yen M. Nguyen
METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR : Mail Stop: AF
TREATING EXHAUST GAS

AFTER FINAL AMENDMENT

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Responsive to the Office Action dated July 12, 2010, Applicants herein provide the following amendments and remarks.

The USPTO is hereby authorized to charge any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16, 1.17, and 1.492, which may be required by this paper to Deposit Account No. 23-0975.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method of treating an exhaust gas containing a fluorine compound, said method comprising:
 - heating the exhaust gas in the presence of O₂ without adding H₂O and/or H₂ to the exhaust gas while passing the exhaust gas through a detour path formed by plural plate members; and
 - then adding H₂O to the exhaust gas, in a space in which no plate member for a detour path is provided therein, to decompose or oxidize the fluorine compound.
2. (Previously Presented) The method of treating an exhaust gas according to claim 1, wherein the fluorine compound is decomposed or oxidized in the presence of a catalyst after H₂O is added to the exhaust gas.
3. (Previously Presented) The method of treating an exhaust gas according to claim 1, further comprising:
 - before said heating, removing at least one of a powdery component, a water-soluble component, and a hydrolytic component from the exhaust gas.
4. (Previously Presented) The method of treating an exhaust gas according to claim 1, further comprising:
 - after the fluorine compound is decomposed or oxidized, removing an acid gas, which is produced when the fluorine compound is decomposed, from the exhaust gas.
5. (Currently Amended) A method of treating an exhaust gas containing a fluorine compound, said method comprising:
 - heating the exhaust gas in the presence of O₂ without adding H₂O and/or H₂ to the exhaust gas while passing the exhaust gas through a detour path formed by plural plate members; and
 - then adding H₂ to the exhaust gas, in a space in which no plate member for a detour path is provided therein, to decompose or oxidize the fluorine compound.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of treating an exhaust gas according to claim 5, wherein the fluorine compound is decomposed or oxidized in the presence of a catalyst after H₂ is added to the exhaust gas.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of treating an exhaust gas according to claim 5, further comprising:

before said heating, removing at least one of a powdery component, a water-soluble component, and a hydrolytic component from the exhaust gas.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of treating an exhaust gas according to claim 5, further comprising:

after the fluorine compound is decomposed or oxidized, removing an acid gas, which is produced when the fluorine compound is decomposed, from the exhaust gas.

9-14. (Withdrawn)

15-16. (Cancelled)

REMARKS

In an Office Action dated July 12, 2010, claims 1-8 of the present application were rejected. Herein, claims 1 and 5 have been amended. No new matter has been added. Applicants respectfully request continued examination and reconsideration in view of the following.

I. Claim Objections

Claim 1 was objected to due to informalities. In particular, the Examiner notes that the word "through" is misspelled as "though" in claim 1. Applicants note that claim 1 has been amended to change "though" to --through--. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the objection to claim 1 be withdrawn.

II. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over EP 1101524 (hereafter "EP '524") in view of Arno (US 6,905,663), and further in view of Paules (US 4,015,546) or Pibernat (US 4,397,293). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the above-noted rejection in view of the following.

Claim 1 recites heating an exhaust gas in the presence of O₂ without adding H₂O and/or H₂ to the exhaust gas while passing the exhaust gas through a detour path formed by plural plate members. Applicants respectfully submit that this feature of claim 1 is not disclosed, suggested, or otherwise rendered obvious by any combination of EP '524, Arno, Paules, and Pibernat.

EP '524 discloses passing a waste gas through a thermal decomposition means which is supplied with H₂, O₂, and H₂O to decompose PFCs, oxidizing gases, and CO into acidic gases and CO₂ (Paragraph [0024]). However, Applicants note that EP '524 provides no disclosure as to the structure of the thermal decomposition means.

Arno discloses the treatment of a fluorocompound containing gas by passing the fluorocompound containing gas via a gas flow passage 24 through a pre-heat stage 6 to a reaction stage 7 in which steam is introduced into the gas flow passage 24 at a steam entrance 30 causing

the steam to mix and react with the fluorine constituents of the gas stream (Col. 4, Lines 49-57, and FIG. 2). However, Applicants note that Arno provides no disclosure as to the structure of the gas flow passage 24 during pre-heat stage 6 or reaction stage 7.

Paules is directed to a refuse incinerator in which refuse is introduced into a combustion chamber 89a within a primary incinerator 86a. Additionally, the primary incinerator 86a includes a heat exchanger 98a located around an outer metal shell 90a of the combustion chamber 89a such that a heat exchange channel 160 is formed outside the combustion chamber 89a (Col. 11, Lines 15-19).

In this regard, Paules teaches the use of spiral baffles 162 in the heat exchange channel 160 in order to increase retention time of air within the heat exchange channel 160 before the air is discharged into the combustion chamber 89a (Col. 11, Lines 25-30). However, Applicants note that the spiral baffles are not provided in the path of the refuse (i.e., the object that is to be treated in the combustion chamber does not pass through the spiral baffles of the heat exchange channel).

Pibernat is directed to a heating apparatus having a heat recovery apparatus. In particular, Pibernat discloses that the heating apparatus includes: a combustion air inlet 1 that opens into a large capacity container 6; a hearth 2; a combustion chamber 3 positioned underneath the hearth 2; and a heat recovery apparatus 4 located in the combustion chamber 3 positioned underneath the hearth 2. During operation of the heating apparatus, combustion air is introduced into the container 6, and heat generated by the hearth 2 is directed into the combustion chamber 3 and a space 13 before being evacuated by an evacuation line 15.

Additionally, Pibernat teaches that the heat recovery apparatus 4 includes two connected casings 4A and 4B to which a line 16 is connected by which a heat exchange gas or fluid may be introduced such that heat may be recovered from the combustion chamber 3 and released to a heating system (Col. 2, Lines 29-34 and 45-47). Additionally, Pibernat discloses that the casings 4A and 4B may include interior baffles so as to increase the path of the heat exchange fluid such that the maximum amount of heat is recovered (Col. 2, Lines 57-60).

However, Applicants note that during the operation of the heating apparatus, combustion air let into the heating apparatus via the combustion air inlet 1 does not pass through the heat recovery apparatus 4, (i.e., the object that is to be treated by interacting with the hearth in the combustion chamber does not pass through the interior baffles in the heat recovery apparatus).

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that any combination of EP '524, Arno, Paules, and Pibernat would, at best, teach the use of baffles in a heat exchange channel for preheating air provided to a combustion chamber, or the use of baffles in a heat exchange channel for recovering heat from the combustion chamber. However, as none of the cited references teach the use of baffles within a combustion chamber, and as none of the cited references teach passing the object to be treated through baffles during a combustion stage, Applicants respectfully submit that any combination of EP '524, Arno, Paules, and Pibernat could not teach passing an exhaust gas (i.e., the object to be treated during the heating stage) through baffles during a heating stage.

In contrast to any combination of EP '524, Arno, Paules, and Pibernat, claim 1 requires that an exhaust gas, which is to be treated by the method of claim 1, be heated in the presence of O₂ without adding H₂O and/or H₂ to the exhaust gas while passing the exhaust gas through a detour path formed by plural plate members. In other words, claim 1 requires that the exhaust gas, which is to be treated by the method of claim 1, pass through the detour path during the heating stage.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that any combination of EP '524, Arno, Paules, and Pibernat fails to disclose, suggest, or otherwise render obvious the above-noted feature of claim 1. Therefore, claim 1 is patentable over any combination of EP '524, Arno, Paules, and Pibernat.

Applicants note that by providing the above-noted feature of claim 1, it is possible to achieve the advantageous effect of greatly increasing the temperature of the exhaust gas during the heating stage. As such, the decomposition efficiency (or reaction efficiency) of the exhaust

gas is improved during the heating process. Applicants note that as none of the cited references teach the use of baffles in a combustion chamber, and that as none of the cited references teach passing the object to be treated in a combustion chamber through baffles, any combination of EP '524, Arno, Paules, and Pibernat could not achieve the above-noted advantageous effect of the presently claimed invention.

Additionally, claim 1 recites heating an exhaust gas in the presence of O₂ without adding H₂O and/or H₂ to the exhaust gas while passing the exhaust gas through a detour path formed by plural plate members, and then adding H₂O to the exhaust gas, in a space in which no plate member for a detour path is provided therein, to decompose or oxidize a fluorine compound. Applicants respectfully submit that these features of claim 1 are not disclosed, suggested, or otherwise rendered obvious by any combination of EP '524, Arno, Paules, and Pibernat.

As noted above, EP '524 provides no disclosure as to structure of the thermal decomposition means, and Arno provides no disclosure as to the structure of the gas flow passage during the pre-heat stage or the reaction stage.

Applicants note that Paules discloses the use of spiral baffles 162 throughout the entirety of the heat exchange channel 160 (*See* FIG. 7), and that Pibernat discloses the use of interior baffles 18 throughout the entirety of casings 4A and 4B of the heat recovery apparatus 4 (*See* FIG.s 1 and 2). In other words, Paules and Pibernat teach the use of baffles in a conduit, apart from a combustion chamber, throughout the entirety of the conduit, i.e., from an inlet to an outlet.

Assuming for the sake of argument that any combination of EP '524, Arno, Paules, and Pibernat could teach using baffles within a conduit during the treatment of an object, Applicants respectfully submit that any combination of the references would require the use of baffles throughout the entirety of the treatment of the object based on the teachings of Paules and Pibernat.

In contrast, Applicants note that amended claim 1 requires heating an exhaust gas in the presence of O₂ without adding H₂O and/or H₂ to the exhaust gas while passing the exhaust gas through a detour path formed by plural plate members, and then adding H₂O to the exhaust gas in a space in which no plate member for a detour path is provided therein to decompose or oxidize a fluorine compound. In other words, amended claim 1 requires that the exhaust gas to not be passed through the detour path during the entirety of the treatment process.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that any combination of EP '524, Arno, Paules, and Pibernat fails to disclose, suggest, or otherwise render obvious the above-noted features of claim 1. Therefore, claim 1 is patentable over any combination of EP '524, Arno, Paules, and Pibernat.

Applicants note that, as described in the specification, adding H₂O to the exhaust gas results in the production of HF (HF being a corrosive gas) due to the decomposition of PFC. By providing the above-noted feature of adding H₂O to the exhaust gas in a space with no plate members provided therein, the corrosive gas (HF) is unable to cause corrosion to the plate members. As such, the above-noted features of the presently claimed invention achieve the advantageous effect of efficient decomposition of the exhaust gas based on the decomposition mechanism of the exhaust gas.

Claims 2-4 are patentable over any combination of EP '524, Arno, Paules, and Pibernat based at least on their dependency from claim 1.

Claim 5 recites heating an exhaust gas in the presence of O₂ without adding H₂O and/or H₂ to the exhaust gas while passing the exhaust gas through a detour path formed by plural plate members, and then adding H₂ to the exhaust gas, in a space in which no plate member for a detour path is provided therein, to decompose or oxidize a fluorine compound. Applicants respectfully submit that any combination of EP '524, Arno, Paules, and Pibernat fails to disclose, suggest, or otherwise render obvious these features of claim 5 for reasons similar to those discussed above with respect to claim 1. Therefore, claim 5 is patentable over any combination of EP '524, Arno, Paules, and Pibernat.

Claims 6-8 are patentable over any combination of EP '524, Arno, Paules, and Pibernat based at least on their dependency from claim 5.

Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Arno in view of EP 1101524, and further in view of Paules or Pibernat. As noted above, claims 1-8 are patentable over any combination of Arno, EP '524, Paules, and Pibernat. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-8 are patentable over Arno in view of EP '524, and further in view of Paules or Pibernat.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-8 are clearly in condition for allowance. An early notice thereof is earnestly solicited.

If, after reviewing this Amendment, the Examiner feels that there are any issues remaining which must be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned by telephone in order to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Yoichi MORI et al.

By _____

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